Relaxation of Visa curbs for Pakistan

2679. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have relaxed visa curbs for some eminent Pakistani nationals;

(b) if so, the norms prescribed for the purpsoe;

(c) the persons covered under this category; and

(d) the details thereof?

THE MINSITER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) to (d) Consistent with the policy of working of promote contacts between the peoples of India and Pakistan at all levels and in keeping with the understandings reached with Pakistan during the visit of Prime Minsiter, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee to Pakistan on February 20-21, 1999 and in the subsequent meeting of the External Affairs Minister, Shri Jaswant Singh with the Pakistan Foreign Minister, Mr. Sartaj Aziz in Sri lanka on March 19, 1999, Government of India have relaxed visa and travel restricitions for the following categories of Pakistani nationals;

(i) Judges of the Supreme Court of Pakistan and of the High Courts.

(ii) Attorney General, Solicitoi General and Chairperson of the Supreme Court Bar association.

(iii) Editors-in-Chief and owners/ principal funcitonaries of national newspapers.

(iv) Members of National Cricket and Hockey teams during their tours of India.

(v) Members of the National Assembly and the Senate, Leaders and Deputy Leaders of Provincial Assemblies and Leaders and Deputy Leaders of Opposition in Provincial Assemblies

(vi) Vice Chancellors of recognised/ approved Universities.

(vii) Secretaries/Secretary rank officers of the Federal Government of Pakistan.

(viii) Spouse, dependent children, i.e., sons upto 18 years of age and unmarried daughters of persons in above-mentioned categories.

The above-mentioned categories of Pakistani nationals would be exempted from police reporting. They will be entitled to multiple entry visas of upto one year duration. They will also be exempted from the requirement of obtaining city-specific visas and will be entitled to travel anywhere in India except certain specified areas for which prior permission would be required. They will also be allowed to enter into and exit from India through any of the five designated checkposts identified for Pakistani nationals.

Views of G-8 Countries on Lifting the Sanctions Imposed on India

2680. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the G-8 task force on India's nuclear tests met recently in Tokyo;

(b) if so, whether there was any unanimous decision;

(c) the countries which were in favour of lifting or easing the sanctions imposed against India and which countries were against; and

(d) what action Government have taken or propsoe to take to convey India's stand to the countries which are not in favour of lifting the sanctions?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) to (c) A meeting of the senior officials of G-8 task Force was held in Tokyo on 11 February 1999 and it